

Ed Maswoka

rec'd
5
April 24, 1988

Dear Tet;

I have a question about a half cent mint error that I was hoping you could answer. I know very little about half cent errors but I did enjoy your article in the 1984 Coinage of the America's conference and after reading it concluded that perhaps you could shed some light on a question that has been bothering me since late February of this year.

On February 27th I was looking at the McLaughlin and Robinson auction lots and came across a 1793 half cent error which was struck off-center.

The half cent had a notch ~~but~~ the part of the coin farthest from the area where the dies had come together. In reviewing old issues of Penny-Wise I came across an article by John Asby Jr. in which he illustrated a 1793 Wreath cent error which was struck off center. This coin also had a notch in the portion of the coin farthest from the area impressed by the dies. I am enclosing a xerox of the pictures of both coins. My question is simply: were the notches the result of the coins being struck by something in the coining press?

I would appreciate hearing any thoughts you might have regarding this puzzle.

Sincerely,

Ed Maser

P.S. I am enclosing a pressing of the only half cent error I own, an 1803 double struck half cent. It pales in comparison to your coins in Breen but I thought you might enjoy seeing a pressing anyway. I didn't make it to the EAC in California but look forward to seeing you at the next one.

R. TETTENHORST
P. O. Box 14020
Saint Louis, Missouri 63178

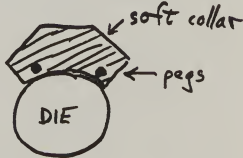
June 15, 1988

Dear Ed,

Sorry for the delay in answering your letter. I have been out of the country, which compounds my natural slowness in getting around to difficult issues. You have posed a very interesting question. Thanks for pointing out the similarity between the off-center half cent and John Ashbey's large cent. I have examined the half cent again (I purchased it in the M+R auction) and consulted with Eric Newman, as well. Eric is extremely knowledgeable about early coining equipment and techniques. After this discussion and from looking at the coin, I have the following opinion.

The dent on both coins occurred during the coining process, in the same fashion, and as a result of being struck off center.

Eric believes that a soft collar, possibly leather, was used to hold the planchet (which had previously had the edge lettered) in place during the coining. This collar, in turn, was held in position by metal pegs; it could thus be easily replaced when worn. The pegs would have protruded well above the plane of whichever die was on the bottom.



The two planchets in question were accidentally

inserted too far into the press, coming to rest on top of a peg. When the upper die came down the coin was struck off center, the peg caused a deep dent (or notch) in the portion of the coin beyond the die, and the planchet was bent upward at the edge of the die.

The appearance of the half cent supports this theory. The dent

is deep. It is substantially bent away from the dent. It would be interesting to know if Holby's cent is also bent. The photograph seems to show that it is. Congratulations on your sharp eye and shrewd guess or deduction!



all of this is only a reasonable hypothesis, of course, until we find a picture or detailed description of the press.

By the way, my trip was to Spain. In Seville the Archives of the Indies had on display a large number of diagrams of the mints of South America during the early colonial period, together with drawings of the coinage equipment. Someone might locate there a detailed diagram of an 18th Century South American coin press which showed such a collar and peg. It would certainly be a pleasant place in which to conduct a search.

Three other comments: 1) Thanks for the pressing of your 1803. Does the coin show double striking on the obverse? I could only identify the reverse D/S from the pressing. It is a nice clean example.

2) Do you think Parry- Wise would be interested in our exchange of letters on the 1793's?

3) I will send you on a confidential basis the listing of Missouri Cabinet half cents. Tell

Ed Masuoka

rec'd
6-24
June 19, 1988

R. Tettenhorst
P. O. Box 14020
Saint Louis, Missouri 63178

Dear Tett;

Thank you for the detailed answer to my question about what might have caused the grooves in the 1793 half cent and large cents. I'm sure the readers of Penny-Wise would be interested in our exchange of letters regarding the 1793's and the mint's first coin press.

The double struck 1803, from which the pressing was made, is double struck only on the reverse. I assume the coin was created in the following way: The coin was struck, failed to eject and another planchet was fed into the press on top of it. The second planchet would have been struck with the obverse die and the obverse of my 1803. My 1803 would have then received a second reverse strike and perhaps would have had its obverse flattened a little by the blank planchet. I welcome any thoughts you might have on how this coin was produced.

Thank you for your offer to send a listing of the Missouri cabinet half cents. A listing of your half cents would allow me to draw a much more accurate picture of the half cent population for each variety. Given the depth and quality of your collection I would ask that you list all of your half cents. If you have them cataloged by both variety and die state, I would appreciate the die state information as well. Also any information you could provide regarding pedigrees would be very welcome.

I would like to include information derived from Missouri cabinet holdings in my half cent survey. There are two approaches I could use to insure that the information is not linked to the Missouri cabinet. First, I could list your best coin for each variety under the heading Anonymous Collector 4, your second best under Anonymous Collector 5 and so on. Second, I could include your holdings in the data used to generate the summary which appears at the end of the survey listings but not list them in the preceding sections of the survey. The second approach would provide all the relevant data without giving most readers a clue that the Missouri cabinet holdings are included in the summary. I have enclosed a copy of the latest half cent survey summary to give you an idea of how collections are listed.

I have placed your name on my mailing list for the survey summary and collector directory. The next issue of the summary and directory will be mailed to you in late August or early September of this year. The exact date depends on when I receive information from prominent half cent collectors in California and Florida who have promised to send listings of their collections. I would appreciate any ideas you have on how to improve the survey summary or directory.

Thanks again for answering my question regarding the 93's. Looking forward to seeing you at the next half cent happening.

Sincerely,



Edward Masuoka

P.S. I am returning a copy of your letter in case you didn't make one. I don't know if there is still time to make the end of June deadline for the July issue of Penny-Wise.

R. TETTENHORST
P. O. Box 14020
Saint Louis, Missouri 63178

June 29, 1988

Dear Ed,

You asked for thoughts about how your 1803 double struck on one side only could have been produced.

There are two ways that I believe this could have happened. The more common method is the one you describe, which I call the brochage method.

We know this happened from time to time because of brochage half cents and large cents we have seen, both undisturbed and as undertypes for a second striking.

However, there is also another way your coin could have been produced.

On occasion two blank planchets were fed into the press at the same time. Each would receive a uniface impression of a single die, remaining blank on the side that was in contact with the other blank planchet. (I have such a uniface reverse of 1809, illustrated in Green) If a uniface coin were considered not suitable to be placed in

circulation and returned to the press for another striking, the coin would also look like yours.

Is there a way to tell which method produced your coin? Happily, there is! Assuming that the variety is one which normally comes with the two dies in the usual orientation to each other (not "rotated"), consider the orientation of the singly struck side to the double struck side. In the case of the brockage maker, the singly struck side will be aligned with the first strike on the double struck side, because it received its impression on the first strike. The ex-uniface coin, however, will have its singly struck side aligned with the second strike of the double struck side, since it received its impression on the second strike. Take a look at yours.

I have some reservations about having MOAB half cents listed as a collection (or two collections) and compared competitively with other collections. Perhaps we can talk about this sometime face to face. Are you coming to the ANA this summer?

Keep up your fine work.

Tell

Hi Tett, 2205

Thanks for adopting
these and giving them
a great new home!!!!

Enjoy,

Ed

Ed Masuoka

rec'd.
7-8
July 3, 1988

Dear Tett,

Thanks for sharing your thoughts with me regarding how the 1863 half cent (double struck on the reverse) might have been produced. Your description of how the coin might have been produced and how to determine which method produced the coin was a wonderful bit of numismatic deduction. Your letter made me realise that the scientific method of developing a hypothesis and testing it is applicable to numismatics as well as geology or other disciplines.

I can understand your reservations about listing the MO cabinet in the survey. I won't be able to attend the July ANA but perhaps we can meet at the next EAC annual convention and discuss this subject. In the meantime if the notion of using data from the MO cabinet in the summary table near the end of the survey is acceptable, please mail a listing of the MO cabinet. The

Summary table lists: number reported, average grade and best five coins for each variety of the ninety-nine business strikes. Using your data in the summary would provide a more accurate picture of the extant half cents in each variety but would avoid all aspects of comparing MO cabinet with other collections. I plan to run this survey for at least the next ten years so there is no rush on sending me the data. The next update of the Survey is due to be mailed in mid-September, however.

I'm looking forward to meeting you at the next EAC convention. Thanks for all your help.

Ed

10/31/88

Dear Ed —

Thanks for the meeting writeup
and announcement!

No, I've not heard a word
from Tett since his article
in the Dr. Edwards copies appeared
(nor, to my disappointment, has
that article provoked a single
comment — not even a hearty
"well done!")

Especially under those circum-
stances, I think we should
clear any publication of what
be sent you in advance of
publishing the same; assuming
he's amenable, I'd love to have
it for P-W. — Many regards

Ed Masuoka


December 20, 1988

R. Tettenhorst
P. O. Box 14020
Saint Louis, Missouri 63178


Dear Tett;

I wrote to Harry Salyards regarding possible publication of our exchange of letters on the subject of the off-center dented half cent and large cent. I am enclosing a copy of his reply. If you are willing to have your letter to me published, I will type up both letters and scan photographs of the two coins and your illustrations into my Macintosh computer. After the draft is finished I will send a copy for your approval.

I did not keep a copy of my letter to you regarding the off center coins. If you still have it, please mail me a copy. Otherwise I will simply paraphrase my question to you and follow it with your letter. If you have a black and white photograph of the off-center 1793 half cent and wouldn't mind loaning it to me for a few days, I will scan it in. I have also asked Jack Robinson to check his photo files for the negative used to produce the photograph in the M&R auction catalog.

On a slightly different note, I've noticed that all 1795 C-5b and C-6b half cents I have examined have what looks like a scratch, seam or V shaped groove near the center of the rim. On the 1795 C-6b Jim McGuigan has for sale it is very noticeable though doesn't quite fit the description presented above. When you find the time perhaps you could look at the MO cabinet 1795 5b's and 6b's. I am guessing that the mark on the edge may have occurred during the process of cutting down the planchets. I would appreciate any explanation you can provide.

I have enclosed a copy of the November half cent collection survey and directory of collectors. There are four corrections to the survey that came in after copies were made: the CEO 1794 C-8 is a C-9 and has been sold, the JHR collection has been sold at auction, SKE reported at 1794 C-4b but later discovered that it was a 4a and ANS reported an 1802 C1 which turned out to be a C2. The Golden State Collection is being sold one coin at a time and may not be accurate with respect to the remaining Liberty Cap half cents. The GSC Draped Bust half cents are being kept intact at present.

I would like to incorporate the MO cabinet half cents in the summary statistics listed at the end of the collections. I am not certain I will be able to attend the EAC convention in Cincinnati this year so I can't say when we would be able to talk face to face. However, if you feel we could work so of the details out in a phone call, please call me at 

██████████ in the evenings. If you have difficulty getting through, (I am often tied into my computer center from home) please leave me a message on ██████████. If you let me know when you will try calling, I will make certain I do not tie up the phone.

I am writing an article for Penny-Wise comparing famous half cent collections. So far I am comparing the Alvord, Ryder, Anderson-Dupont, Brobston and Norweb collections. I would like to include the Showers collection in the comparison but do not have enough data on it to do so. Perhaps, it would be possible to use information about the Showers coins in MO cabinet. I am also trying to borrow a copy of the Stack's photographs of the Showers collection but am not sure when I will be able to borrow it. Please let me know if you have an objection to my including the Showers half cents in the article.

Looking forward to hearing from you in '89.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ed Masuoka".

Ed Masuoka

Home

R. TETTENHORST
P. O. Box 14020
Saint Louis, Missouri 63178

January 26, 1989

Mr. Ed Masuoka


Dear Ed:

Thanks for your letter of December 20. I have no objection to your submitting our correspondence for publication. However, I would prefer that you do it without using my name. Simply say that you wrote "an EAC friend" or some such description. However, before you and Harry definitely decide to print this, you may want to review a quiz and answer that I wrote for Penny-Wise on the same subject many years ago. It ran under the heading "Tett's Tester" in two parts, one just before and the other just after the EAC meeting which was held in San Mateo a few years ago. You and Harry may conclude that our correspondence is essentially a repeat of what was printed earlier.

If you decide that you do want to run the article, let me know and I will look for the original of your letter.

I will address the other subjects in your letter when I get back from California and give you a response on them as well.

Sincerely,

R. Tettenhorst

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